EXCISE (59)

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ACTION NEA-11
INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED☒ in part
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS B-1

C 101816Z JUN 81
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2794
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 13889
VIENNA FOR USIAEA
JERUSALEM ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR STEINER
E.O. 12065: GDS 6/10/87 (WENDT, E. ALLAN) CR-M
TAGS: PEPR, EG, IS, IZ
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REACTION TO ISRAELI STRIKE AGAINST IRAQI NUCLEAR FACILITY
REFS: (A) CAIRO 13663, (B) CAIRO 13712,
(C) FBIS NC 092252
(- ENTIRE TEXT.
1. SUMMARY. EGYPTIAN REACTION TO THE ISRAELI RAID ON THE IRAQI NUCLEAR FACILITY LAST MONDAY HAS BEEN ONE OF
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UNIVERSAL CONDEMNATION AND OUTRAGE. THE GOE HAS TAKEN A SERIES OF DIPLOMATIC STEPS IN CAIRO, VIENNA, NEW YORK TO CONVEY IN STRONG TERMS ITS DEEP CONCERN OVER THE ISRAELI ACTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PEACE PROCESS. THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY LAST EVENING JOINED THE PRESIDENCY AND FOREIGN MINISTRY IN ISSUING A FORTHRIGHT STATEMENT OF DENUNCIATION. EGYPTIANS ARE CONCERNED IN PARTICULAR OVER THE IMPACT OF THE RAID ON SADAT'S CREDIBILITY AND THE PROSPECTS FOR THE CAMP DAVID PROCESS, GIVEN ITS TIMING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SADAT-BEGIN SUMMIT AT SHARM EL SHEIKH. AT A MINIMUM, EGYPTIANS FEEL THEIR PRESIDENT HAS BEEN MADE TO APPEAR A DUPE, WHILE SOME BELIEVE HE HAD FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE EVENT. THERE IS WIDESPREAD FEAR THAT ARAB RADICALS WILL CLAIM SADAT CONSPIRED IN THE ATTACK IN AN EFFORT TO ISOLATE EGYPT FURTHER IN THE ARAB WORLD. EGYPT'S NUCLEAR
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COMMUNITY IS ANGRY, TOO, AT ISRAEL'S DISREGARI FOR THE NPT SAFEGUARDS THAT EGYPT HAS ONLY RECENTLY ADOPTED. WHILE EMOTIONS, BOTH IN THE PARLIAMENT AND IN THE STREETS, HAVE BEEN-RUNNING HIGH, EGYPTIANS BY AND LARGE ACCEPT THAT THEIR GOVERNMENT HAS GONE AICUT AS FAR AS IT CAN WITHCUT SERIOUSLY JECPARDIZING FINAL SINAI WITHIRAWAL. WHILE TEMPERS MAY COOL AS THOUGHTFUL EGYPTIANS CONTEMPLATE THE COURSES REALISTICALLY OPEN TO THEM, THEY ARE LOOKING NCW TO THE U.S. TO TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION TO DEMONSTRATE THAT ISRAEL HAS TRANSGRESSED THE LIMITS OF SELF-DEFENSE AND ENGAGED IN WHAT THEY SEE AS UNJUSTIFIED AGGRESSION. END SUMMARY.

2. EGYPTIAN REACTION TO THE ISRAELI STRIKE MONDAY AGAINST THE IRAQI NUCLEAR FACILITY NEAR BAGHDAD HAS BEEN UNIVERSALLY CONDEMNATORY, FOCUSING ON WHAT IS VIEWED HERE AS ISRAEL'S UNPROVOKED AGGRESSION AGAINST A

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FELLOW ARAB STATE AND ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE RAID FOR THE PEACE PROCESS. ANGER IS EVIDENT IN BOTH PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY COMMENTS. EGYPTIANS FEEL BETRAYED BECAUSE OF THEIR NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO PEACE AND DUPED BECAUSE OF SADAT'S MEETING WITH BEGIN LAST WEEK IN SHARM EL-SHEIKH.

3. AFTER A FULL DAY OF DEBATE AND DRAFTING SESSIONS, THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY LAST EVENING ADOPTED A RESOLUTION (REF C) THAT BRANDED THE ISRAELI ATTACK "AN UNACCEPTABLE ACT OF TERRORISM" AND CALLED ON THE U.S. "TO ADOPT ALL NECESSARY MEASURES...AND RECONSIDER ITS ARMS SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL." MEMBERS TOLD US THAT SENTIMENT IN THE ASSEMBLY WAS RUNNING HIGH, REFLECTING PUBLIC OUTRAGE, AS WELL AS CONCERN THAT EGYPT NOT REMAIN PASSIVE IN THE FACE OF WHAT IS SEEN AS ISRAEL'S AGGRESSION. WHILE THE FINAL RESOLUTION WAS RELATIVELY RESTRAINED, THERE WAS REPORTEDLY SUPPORT, EVEN AMONG NDP MEMBERS, FOR BILATERAL SANCTIONS INCLUDING THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMBASSADORS, SEVERING OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, FREEZING OF NORMALIZATION AND EVEN CUTTING OFF OIL SHIPMENTS.

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4. THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION FOLLOWED A SERIES OF DIPLOMATIC STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOE TO CONVEY THE FULL SENSE OF ITS OUTRAGE TO ISRAEL. THESE INCLUDE THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENTS REPORTED REF B; A FORMAL NOTE OF PROTEST DELIVERED TUESDAY TO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 13889
THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR BY SAAD KHALIL, THE CHIEF OF THE NORMALIZATION DEPARTMENT; A DEMARCHE BY EGYPT'S IAEA REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AGENCY'S COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS; AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT EGYPT'S UN PERMREP ABDEL MAGUID HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL EGYPT'S CONDEMNATION OF THE ISRAELI RAID IN PREPARATION FOR FRIDAY'S UNSC SESSION AND TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING ITSELF;

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SUCH STEPS FALL SHORT OF WHAT SOME EGYPTIANS MAY HAVE SOUGHT, BUT AS A FIRST REACTION THEY ARE COMPREHENSIVE AND MUTUALLY REINFORCING.

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5. ONE FOCUS OF CONCERN AMONG ALL EGYPTIANS TO WHOM WE SPOKE WAS THE IMPACT OF THE RAID ON SADAT'S CREDIBILITY, FOLLOWING AS IT DID ON THE HEELS OF HIS COMPLIANCE WITH BEGIN'S REQUEST FOR A SUMMIT. SOME EGYPTIANS FEAR THAT ARAB CRITICS OF SADAT WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PROXIMITY IN TIMING OF THE TWO EVENTS TO ACCUSE SADAT OF COMPLICITY IN THE ATTACK. (A TAXI DRIVER, FOR EXAMPLE, TOLD US THAT MORE THAN HALF HIS PASSENGERS BELIEVED SADAT KNEW IN ADVANCE OF THE RAID.) OTHERS, INCLUDING ASSEMBLY ARAB AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MOHAMMED HAMED MAHMOUD, BELIEVE BEGIN TIMED THE ATTACK IN A DELIBERATE EFFORT TO EMBARRASS SADAT AND DESTROY ANY CHANCE FOR A RECONCILIATION WITH THE ARABS. SOME SEE

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THE CONJUNCTION AS INTENDED TO PROVOKE AN EGYPTIAN RESPONSE THAT WILL GIVE ISRAEL THE EXCUSE IT IS SEEKING NOT TO COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM EGYPTIAN TERRITORY. ALL ARE AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT SADAT HAS BEEN DUPED AND THAT BEGIN HAS PROVED HIMSELF UNWORTHY OF TRUST.

6. EGYPTIAN SUSPICIONS OF ISRAELI INTENTIONS, WHILE NEVER FULLY ALLAYED, HAVE BEEN REVIVED AND RECONFIRMED BY THE BAGHDAD RAID. THE FEELING IS WIDESPREAD THAT ISRAEL'S SUPPOSED COMMITMENT TO PEACE HAS BEEN UNMASKED AND THAT THE CAMP DAVID PROCESS HAS BEEN UNDERMINED. EGYPTIAN NUCLEAR SPECIALISTS HAVE CITED IRAQ'S ADHERENCE TO THE NPT (WHICH EGYPT RECENTLY RATIFIED) AS EVIDENCE THAT THE IRAQI FACILITY POSED NO THREAT TO ISRAEL. IF ISRAEL WOULD DISREGARD THIS FACTOR ONCE, SOME OF THEM ASK, WHAT WOULD PREVENT IT FROM TAKING SIMILAR ACTION AGAINST EGYPT, OR ANY OTHER STEPS, IN VIOLATION OF TREATY COMMITMENTS, ISRAEL JUDGED NECESSARY. SEVERAL OF OUR CONTACTS RECALLED THE ASSASSINATION IN PARIS LAST YEAR, EGYPTIANS BELIEVE BY ISRAELI SECURITY, OF AN EGYPTIAN

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SCIENTIST EMPLOYED IN THE IRAQI NUCLEAR RESEARCH PROGRAM.

7. ASSESSING THE SITUATION SOBERLY, EGYPTIANS REALIZE THEIR OPTIONS ARE LIMITED IF SINAI IS NOT TO BE SACRIFICED. THE DIPLOMATIC CAMPAIGN THE GOE HAS UNDERTAKEN HAS THE FULL SUPPORT OF PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENT ALIKE (THOUGH SOME, AS WE HAVE NOTED, HOPED FOR MORE). MOST EGYPTIANS LOOK TO THE U.S. AS ALONE CAPABLE OF TAKING EFFECTIVE ACTION TO CURE ISRAEL'S EXCESS. IF THE U.S. FAILS TO ACT DECISIVELY, IN A MANNER COMMENSURATE WITH THE GRAVITY OF ISRAEL'S ACTION, EGYPTIANS TELL US, THE U.S. WILL LOSE ALL CREDIBILITY AS A FORCE FOR PEACE IN THE EYES OF THE EGYPTIAN PUBLIC AND THE ARAB MODERATES. EVEN SADAT'S DOMESTIC FOES (AND CRITICS OF CAMP DAVID) HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THEY HOPE THIS DOES NOT COME TO PASS.

8. ONE AREA OF SPECULATION IS THE IMPACT THE ISRAELI RAID WILL HAVE ON SADAT'S RELATIONS WITH BEGIN AND OTHER ISRAELI LEADERS. [redacted] B-1

[redacted] WHAT THE ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES OF SADAT'S IRE WILL BE ARE MORE DIFFICULT TO PREDICT.

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